

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

Division of Environmental Health Services:

- 385 North Arrowhead Avenue – San Bernardino, CA 92415-0160 – (909) 884-4056
- 8575 Haven Avenue, Suite 130 – Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730-9105 – (909) 948-5058
- 15900 Smoke Tree Street, Suite 131 – Hesperia, CA 92345 – (760) 995-8154
- San Bernardino County Vector Control Program
2355 East 5th Street – San Bernardino, CA 92410-5201 – (909) 388-4600

ALLAN RAWLAND
Acting Public Health Director

TRUDY RAYMUNDO
Assistant Director of Public Health

MAXWELL OHIKHUARE, M.D.
Health Officer

TERRI WILLIAMS, R.E.H.S.
Division Chief, Environmental Health Services

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CONTACT: Corwin Porter, MPH, R.E.H.S.
Program Manager
(909) 387-4692

EASTER EGG FOOD SAFETY

If you and your family celebrate Easter by hunting for Easter eggs, you should be aware of some food safety tips. As with any holiday food preparation, safe food handling and storage are important to keep your loved ones safe.

Before any type of interaction with eggs, it is important to first wash your hands and your work area thoroughly. Always wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before beginning food preparation and at every step of preparing Easter eggs including cooking, cooling and dyeing of eggs. To avoid cross-contamination, you should also wash forks, knives, spoons and all counters and other surfaces that touch the eggs with hot water and soap. Use gloves to handle food if you have a cut or infection.

Make sure the eggs you color don't have any cracks. If any eggs crack during dyeing or while on display, make sure to throw them away. Be sure to refrigerate eggs within two hours after cooking and decorating them. Check your refrigerator temperature to make sure it's set at 41°F or below.

Use food grade dye if you plan to eat the Easter eggs you decorate. You may want to consider making two sets of eggs, one for decorating and hiding and another for eating. Keep cooked eggs chilled in the refrigerator until just before the hunt. Hide eggs in places that are protected from dirt, pets and other bacteria sources. While hunting for Easter eggs, try to avoid cracking the egg shells. If the shells crack then bacteria could enter and contaminate the egg inside. The total time for hiding and hunting for eggs should be no more than two hours. Be sure to refrigerate the "found" eggs right away until you eat them. Eggs found hours later or the next day should not be eaten and thrown away!

For more information, contact the County of San Bernardino, Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Services, at 909-884-4056 or visit our website at www.sbcounty.gov/dehs.

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